

International Socialist Organization

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# CAMPUS TOOLKIT



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## ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This *Campus Toolkit* is aimed at acquainting ISO student members with the basic tools necessary to be a socialist on campus. It is for student members of the International Socialist Organization (ISO), from long-standing members to new ones. Here, you will find sections on the basics of membership, along with sections that offer “how-to” suggestions for building the ISO on campus. The toolkit is intended as a reference. It isn't necessary to read it cover to cover before joining or becoming an active member of the ISO. Some members will want to read the handbook cover to cover—others will refer to it as the occasion arises. While this toolkit is intended to give new student recruits a good idea of how the ISO operates and to help new branches begin to organize, it cannot cover every possible situation. Nor is there space to take up our political perspectives, as well as specific tactical or strategic issues. For additional guidance, members should talk to their branch or regional organizers—and refer to ISO literature, including its convention documents, internal bulletins, and the *ISO Notes*.

# 1 Becoming a student member of the ISO

There are some basic requirements for being an ISO member. An ISO member is someone who (1) agrees with the basic politics of the organization, which are outlined in *Where We Stand: The Politics of the International Socialist Organization*, published by the ISO education department and available on the ISO website. These politics are explained more fully in *The Meaning of Marxism* by Paul D'Amato, which is available from Haymarket Books.

Members (2) also agree: to pay monthly dues to the organization (see the sliding scale dues structure in the “Funding the Organization” section of this toolkit); (3) to take, read, and sell Socialist Worker newspaper; (4) to work within and under the direction of the appropriate bodies of the organization; and (5) to help build and lead movements of workers and the oppressed. This last requirement means that all members shall be members of an appropriate trade union in their workplace where possible.

Being a member of the ISO, however, involves much more than these important formal membership requirements. Our aim is to build an organization of experienced, critically-minded Marxist leaders and organizers, rooted in workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods that, in fighting today's struggles, also wins larger numbers to socialism.

In order for the ISO to grow, we have to convince other people of the need to join our organization. By joining, members therefore commit themselves to building the ISO on their campus and through other efforts. If you have joined on a campus where there are already other members, you can immediately get involved in organizing. If you are the first member on your campus, then the first step is meeting the people who can become the next members—people with whom you can not only engage in political discussion about socialist politics, but also invite to work with you to build for meetings and other branch activities. Sitting down and patiently convincing people of our politics, as well as giving them specific ways to get involved in the work of the ISO before they've joined, are important parts of cohering the members necessary to form a branch of the ISO. Contact the ISO organizing department at [orgdept@internationalsocialist.org](mailto:orgdept@internationalsocialist.org) for help in developing a plan that fits your situation.

New members should also acquaint themselves with the “Becoming a Marxist” reading guide, a recommended list of readings to further members' Marxist education, which appears as “Appendix D” below.

# 2 Building on campus

Historically campuses are places where you can find relatively large numbers of young people who are attracted to radical critiques of society and want to act to change the world. The contradiction in the university between the promise of a “liberal arts” education and the reality of intellectual straight-jacketing produces questioning among a layer of students at a moment in their lives when they have not yet found their place in society. Because of that, socialists have always considered the campus an important arena to lay down political bases, participate in struggle, and find, recruit, and train the next layer of Marxist militants. The economic situation of today's students, who face increasing college costs and shrinking job opportunities, also leads a layer of them to be sympathetic to radical ideas. Colleges and universities are highly politicized places. Whether it is in the classroom or in front of a rally, college campuses continually throw up political situations and questions that socialists can provide an alternative perspective on.

The structure of campuses (condensed spaces with large numbers of students and workers from different backgrounds and places, in an environment that must at least formally allow for freedom of press, speech, and assembly) means that even modest campaigns and struggles can produce movement and revolutionary cadre. The self-contained world of the campus allows relatively small groups of radicals (ISO members and others) to have an impact disproportionate to their actual numbers. In this context, revolutionaries can have far more political influence than it is currently possible to have outside the campus. Gaining the experience of the political dynamics during struggles (even relatively minor campus struggles) allows student socialists to put their politics into practice and develop the political skills necessary for future battles (including ones that take place wholly or partly on campuses, such as the recent student movements in California, Chile, and Québec). There are other ways to do this, but political work on campuses are one of the most important, especially given the current low level of class struggle.

In a workplace, it is generally not permitted for a minority of workers to take any sort of action—especially without the protection of a strong union. This means that it is much harder to gain this sort of activist experience in the workplace. On campuses, students can learn to create all sorts of exposures, protests, actions, confrontations, debates, etc. with relatively little fear of legal retribution. The main consequences that student members of the ISO might face for their political activity are bureaucratic attacks by hostile administrators (often by accusing activists of violating one of many thousands of university rules) and unfair academic retaliation from unsympathetic faculty. But even these attacks can be used to our advantage. Since there is a wide

expectation that campuses should be liberal, democratic environments that tolerate divergent opinions and perspectives, you can find many allies on campus should you be targeted for repression. You also are not isolated to your campus alone. You will find allies far beyond the specific campus on which you organize, both in the ISO and also among other campus activists and left-wing faculty. The ISO has a proud history of successfully helping to defend students and teachers who come under attack for their activism.

Moreover, the ideological nature of the campus means that even small actions can reverberate and create political discussions among thousands of people, including those beyond campus. This dynamic allows ISO members to develop into cadre—socialists capable of leading and training others—by gaining concentrated experience in initiating actions, building united fronts with student organizations and campus trade unions, engaging in collective study, and learning to take action informed by experience, study, and an assessment of the concrete situation faced by your branch.

In our campus work, our aim is to build self-sustaining centers of socialist organizing—campus-based branches whose main activists and leaders are students, and whose central (though by no means only) arena of activism and organizing is the campus.

The key to establishing a base on a college campus is maintaining a consistent political presence that offers a perspective that (a) explains the source of the pressing injustices on campus and in the world, and (b) provides proposals about how those who want to intervene in society to change it can orient their practical activities. Branches should accomplish these tasks by utilizing a regular routine of well-publicized meetings, *Socialist Worker* (*SW*) sales and tablings, study groups, film screenings, as well as by attending and participating in other key campus events. But it means more than this—it means keeping abreast of campus life, familiarizing yourself with other student/activist groups and leaders, and collectively determining as a branch what the key political issues on campus are, and how a debate or fightback can be organized. The aim is to situate ourselves as the most vibrant leftwing hub of discussion, debate, and activism.

Despite the current attack on public education, colleges and universities often have a lot of resources and money that they offer to clubs for student activities. Getting chartered as an official student club on the campus can be a confusing and tedious process, yet it is very important that you take the process seriously. Gaining official club status often allows comrades to reserve rooms with less hassle, opens the doors to school funding, permission to flier and table on campus, and can provide an opportunity to meet other student clubs. It is also a great way to get money for outside

speakers from honoraria or department sponsorship.

It is important to prioritize how we allocate the capacity of our members for various branch activities as there is no shortage of things to do on a campus. New or smaller branches have to deal with the challenge of building a strong ISO branch while participating in struggles on campus, when there might often be more activities than we can take part in. All campus branches must strive to find the balance between involvement in the movement work on campus and building socialist organization through regular political meetings, tablings, and study groups. Providing socialist answers to big ideological questions and ways for activists to build an uncompromising revolutionary alternative will distinguish us from most other forces and convince a layer of activists of the need to build socialist organization. Activities outside of weekly branch meetings and *SW* sales are also very important. For example holding a “*Socialist Worker* coffee hour” on campus around lunchtime can be very effective in drawing around a periphery of contacts and becoming the hub of leftwing discussion on campus.

Student members should be the face of the ISO on campuses (along with faculty and workers). Activist student leaders know the “pulse” of what’s happening politically on campus, have the ability to react to events as they happen, and are the people that their peers are most likely to listen to. It may be necessary to have experienced cadre from off campus help start and support a branch on a campus, but the success of the branch will ultimately depend on the development of student cadre who can lead our campus work.

Student cadre are ISO members who know how to articulate our politics, lead debates, put forward exposures of injustice, recruit new members, and train newer students to be leaders on the campuses. Our goal should be to have branches of students, workers, and faculty, led by students, with the aim of establishing ourselves on a campus for the long-term.

Branch meetings and study groups are places to develop newer members and raise the political level of branch discussions. A study group can involve having a new member give a discussion kickoff highlighting an *SW* or *International Socialist Review* article as a way to talk about a particular idea, issue, or movement. The presenter doesn’t always have to be an expert on a particular topic. Preparing for a presentation in a study group is part of the way that members develop their understanding of political questions. Often when people are able to put forward their questions, it leads to a more dynamic discussion. The process of involving members in study that progressively advances their understanding of the world is an important part of training the next generation of Marxist cadre.

Many of our newest student members are extreme-



ly enthusiastic about building the ISO (and the broader left), and are committed to taking the organization and its politics seriously. We want to build on this enthusiasm and make sure that new members are given opportunities to give public meeting talks, take leadership opportunities within movements, and become leaders within the ISO. Already we have seen some of our newer members take some important steps forward in their development and we want to continue to facilitate and accelerate that process.

### 3 The campus blitz

A “campus blitz” is a period of intensified outreach and publicity where members of the ISO try to win as many people on campus to participating in our upcoming activities as possible. We blitz a campus by setting up tables, hanging posters, passing out leaflets, and knocking on as many dorm doors as possible.

#### **Planning the Blitz**

Come up with a game plan early on. Don’t wait until the last minute to start planning your organizing. Set up a meeting to make a plan and come up with priorities, tasks, and a timeline and division of labor.

In that meeting, have a discussion about what you’re trying to accomplish. Read over Todd C’s document from the *Internal Bulletin #2* (July 2014), “For a New Generation of Student Socialists,” (available from the National Office of the ISO) to frame the discussion. How are we going to win a new generation of students to become lifelong revolutionaries? What are the pressing issues that students on campus will likely be thinking about? What are the key debates we want to engage with? What is our vision for organizing on campus? What should we read to prepare for conversations with the students we meet? Practice 30 second pitches to use on tablings. Brainstorm questions to ask people we meet.

Register as a student club as soon as you can. Sometimes this is not possible before the school year starts, but if it is try to do so as soon as possible. Investigate the rules for starting a club. On many campuses you need a certain number of students to sign on. If you already have the number, great. If not, it is easy enough to gather from your first tabling. Don’t be shy to ask contacts and allies to help out. See the subheading “Registering the ISO as a Club on Campus” under the fundraising section of this toolkit for more information on becoming a registered student organization.

Choose a day and time for the launch meeting. Usually a week or two after the start of classes is an ideal time to organize your first meeting. It allows enough time to properly build for it but is still within the window of time when

students are actively looking for groups to get involved with and haven’t yet been overwhelmed with school work. Reserve a room as soon as you can.

Choose a speaker for your launch meeting who will be confident and compelling. They do not necessarily have to be a student. If so great, but the most important thing is to have a speaker you know can deliver a good talk and inspire people to get involved. If you would like to bring in a national speaker contact the National Office.

Prepare and print out any other sorts of publicity materials you think you might need prior to school starting: a calendar of upcoming meetings, new members packets, flyers for study groups, membership cards, “save the date” flyers for regional conferences, posters and banners for tabling, sign-up sheets, basic info leaflets, etc.

#### **Carrying out the blitz**

Print and post thousands of flyers for your launch meeting. The center has provided a template, attached as an appendix to this toolkit, so you need only fill in the details. If you don’t yet have a room you can still make a save the date flyer with contact info in the meantime.

Identify important publicity events. Most colleges have a freshman orientation week, which may happen before classes officially begin. These include activity fairs, club mixers, events by minority student orientations, etc. These are good places to meet tons of freshman, gather their contact information, and network with other clubs on campus. There will also likely be campus-wide club fairs and other events that are worth being tabling at. Will a huge number of students be at the first football game of the year? We should be there too then. Remember that because of the growing ideological opening in the U.S. (and especially because of the opening on campuses), we will find an active audience on campus open to our politics if we put the necessary work into finding them.

Beyond any of these events, organize regular tablings in busy places on campus. The first week is the time when students are most actively looking for things to get involved with. Make sure you have an impressive display and pull in comrades from other areas of work if necessary to cover! If freshman get to campus early or your campus has summer classes, start tabling in the summer.

Identify classes that student members are in that would be good to make announcements in. If you know sympathetic professors, you may be able to arrange to make announcements in their class even if you don’t have students in it.

Reach out to other activist groups on campus and arrange to come to their meetings to announce the launch. If we don’t already have contacts in these groups, we can still go to their meetings, learn about what they’re working on and how we can collaborate, and tell people about our

group and meeting.

### *Put up posters and storm the dorms*

Come up with a plan and plaster the campus. Most campus clubs are able to access free copying. If so, be sure to take advantage of that. Always carry halfsheet leaflets, copies of the latest issue of *Socialist Worker*, contact sheets, etc., while you're out postering in case you run into folks who want to talk.

A useful feature of many U.S. campuses is that they have dorms where a concentrated number of students live for 8-9 months (or more) out of the year. When this is the case, it provides a large audience for organizing efforts, particularly through "dormstorming". A "dormstorm" is an organized effort to concentrate outreach and publicity efforts within the dorms on a particular campus during a particular period of time.

Some dorms have bulletin boards on every floor. Take advantage of these on a continual basis. Assign comrades to regularly post flyers on them, and check in on a regular basis to make sure plans are being carried out.

Dormstorms are an opportunity to have conversations with sympathetic students. Get into the dorms as soon as possible so students get used to a continual political presence that circulates through their dorm on a regular basis.

Look for other opportunities to publicize our meetings. Can you get an ad in the student newspaper? Hang a banner from a building? Post online in various student forums? Set up a website, Facebook page, and event and consider paying for ads or boosting posts if you have the resources. Share our events widely on social media and don't forget to send custom, tailored messages to particular contacts.

As you're doing your publicity keep an eye out for students you meet who are particularly excited. You shouldn't wait until they've joined to get them involved in helping us build the launch meeting! Set up contact meetings with them and invite them along when you table or poster!

### *Remind contacts about the launch meeting*

Split up and call (or email if they didn't leave a number, but calling must be your number one priority if they did) ALL the contacts you gathered a couple days prior to the launch meeting to remind them about the meeting, see what they thought about the paper, etc. If they can't make the meeting, try and set up another time to meet with them. The contacts coordinator and branch organizer should check in with members to make sure all branch members are carrying out the branch plan and that every contact is getting a phone call.

### ***At the launch meeting***

Have a plan in place for the launch meeting. Make sure

you have posters and banners to put up in the room, a well-stocked literature table, a chair for the meeting, and enough experienced members to talk to people and field questions from the floor. Make sure to pass around a signup sheet and flyers for upcoming meetings, study groups and events to bring people to. Designate someone in charge of assigning follow up with contacts after the meeting.

See the "how to chair an ISO public meeting" sub-heading of the "How To's" section of this toolkit for more information about how the launch meeting should be organized to make for a welcoming, political environment.

### *Follow-through is key*

Even the most successful launch meeting can result in next to nothing if we don't have an ongoing plan in place to meet people, develop an ongoing political relationship with them, and build the ISO on campus.

There are huge openings for us to build right now due to the ongoing radicalization and immiseration created by the capitalist crisis. At the same time there are huge pressures on students to buckle down and focus on their studies and work, not to mention competing ideologies and explanations of the world that we need to contend with. Thus there is nothing automatic about it. But if we demonstrate our seriousness, and take seriously the students we meet, we have every reason to believe we can help build a confident student cadre who will play a decisive role in the struggles, on and off campus, to come.

Don't get overwhelmed. If you can't do all the things on this list with the resources you have, that's ok. Figure out as a branch, in communication with your organizer in the National Office, what you are currently able to successfully do, and prioritize accordingly. Trying to bite off more than you can chew will lead to frustration and burnout. Even if you are only able to recruit and develop a handful of students in the short run, that will put you in a better place for the next round of organizing.

## **4 ISO meetings**

Branch or club meetings are the center of the campus branch's political life. They should provide an environment in which members can learn about the politics of revolutionary socialism and how to develop perspectives for our immediate situations.

The branch meeting is where discussions and assessments of political work take place. Therefore, they should be planned and organized to stimulate discussion and decision-making, so that every member takes part in determining the direction of activities. The meetings should have a chairperson who follows basic democratic procedure

(see “How to chair an ISO branch meeting” subhead of the “How To’s” section of this toolkit), and decisions should be made by majority vote.

All clubs or branches should encourage healthy political debate among members. Debate and discussion help to clarify our politics. We don’t want members to have their questions go unanswered. All members need to behave in a collaborative manner when airing disagreements. Most often, branches have no trouble maintaining a supportive and comradely atmosphere. But it is worth keeping in mind that it is unacceptable for any member to behave in a hostile or otherwise uncomradely manner toward other members or allies. Never forget that we are all on the same side, even when we disagree about particular issues, and we cannot afford to let debates result in a breakdown of mutual trust and collaboration.

Branch/club meetings should occur weekly. They should preferably be at the same time and place on campus so it is easy for people to make a habit of coming to meetings and we don’t lose contact with them due to an irregular or confusing schedule. While all members are expected to attend these meetings, non-members who are sympathetic to the ISO should also be encouraged to attend weekly meetings. Meetings should be kept to a two-hour time limit to make sure everyone can stay until the end of the meeting and hopefully stick around afterward for informal discussion at a café or restaurant near the meeting. The meetings should always make clear ways that attendees can get involved, whether it is to help flier for a meeting or event, attend a protest with us, or join a study group.

In order to attract potential recruits and familiarize them with our politics, all meetings should be public except for special occasions (like members-only meetings to assess our contact work or have preconvention discussions). Student branches are encouraged to regularly publish fliers and online schedules that list the location, time, and topic of upcoming ISO meetings and use them to encourage attendance from those interested in our politics and our activities.

While many students do not have children, it is important to provide childcare if your local meetings begin to attract people with children. This is a reflection of the ISO’s commitment to women’s liberation. One of the key ways in which women are oppressed under capitalism is their traditional role inside the family, in which women are expected to bear disproportionate responsibility for all aspects of child-rearing. This responsibility has historically hampered women’s ability to participate equally with men in political and social movements because women usually stayed home with the children while men went to meetings. One way that we can assist the ability of working-class women to take part in ISO meetings is providing free childcare for any parents who are expected to attend.

It is much easier for the branch to collectively fund and organize childcare at its meetings than for that responsibility to rest solely with individual parents. Please talk to your organizer in the National Office if you have any questions about how to ensure you fulfill this commitment successfully in your branch.

There are four main kinds of ISO meetings: organizing meetings, educational meetings, public meetings, and study groups. The purpose of each type of meeting is explained below:

### *Organizing meetings*

These meetings are important to ensure that the entire branch is involved in decision-making about all aspects of the branch’s work, from deciding the topic for the next meeting to discussing the involvement of members in movement building work. There should be an agenda for each meeting, proposed by the branch committee or branch organizer (an alternative agenda can be proposed by any member in good standing), which branch members vote to accept or amend at the start of each meeting. While every meeting cannot involve discussions about every aspect of the branch’s work, branches should aim to hold focused discussions about all areas of work that members are involved in over a roughly two month time span.

### *Educational meetings*

All members need ongoing political education, and this should be reflected in branch meetings. Although educational meetings can include one or two organizational items on the agenda, the bulk of these meetings should be taken up with a discussion of one planned educational item, with recommended readings from books or publications such as *International Socialist Review (ISR)*. *Socialist Worker* articles can also be a good resource for educational meetings either by themselves or as a complement to other material. They are also a great way to give new members a way to do their first short presentations in the branch. New branches can consult the “Becoming a Marxist” reading guide for help in planning branch education.

### *Public Meetings*

Well-publicized and well-organized public meetings are key ways to both meet students interested in radical politics and also to engage people who have already expressed interest in the ISO. For this reason, branches should plan to hold public meetings on a regular basis—at least once every three weeks. The topics for public meetings include a wide range of possibilities, but branches should aim for a balance between responding to the issues of the day and more focused political presentations. Meetings on the wars in the Middle East, fighting racism, labor struggles, abortion rights, fighting budget cuts, LGBT rights, etc. are im-



portant in attracting people becoming radicalized around a particular issue. It is also extremely important to hold meetings that draw on our political tradition and history, and provide Marxist answers to big ideological questions. Meetings such as “The Meaning of Marxism”, “The Case for Socialism,” “Marxism and women’s liberation”, and “How can we win Palestinian liberation”, which can draw people who are asking big questions about history, analysis, and strategy. (See below for a step-by-step guide to organizing a public meeting).

## Study Groups

In addition to the three different types of branch meetings, study groups can be an important way to familiarize people with the basic ideas of Marxism and to create a more intimate setting to debate out and convince others of our ideas. The study group should involve a smaller number of people (3-5), and can be set up using a preplanned set of readings with study questions (For example, books such as *The Meaning of Marxism*, *The Communist Manifesto*, or *Black Liberation and Socialism*). One member (or in some cases, a contact) can present a short summary of the reading to kick off the discussion. A regular round of introductory study groups covering various aspects of our politics is useful not only to attract and recruit other students, but also to educate ourselves in the various ideas of Marxism. See the “Becoming a Marxist” reading list (included in this toolkit as Appendix D), the National Committee education plan, and the “New Members Study Packet” for lists of readings that are excellent for these study groups. These discussions can also be held in branch meetings.

Study groups can also be used in movement work, for example, by gathering fellow activists in the BDS movement to read *The Struggle for Palestine*, edited by Lance Sella, or Ali Abunimah’s *The Battle for Justice in Palestine* (both published by Haymarket Books), or other works on the subject. Often, this is the only way to engage in sustained political discussion with other movement activists, since the busy pace of activism often leaves students without any political space for anything beyond the nuts and bolts of movement work.

## 5 Contact work and recruitment

As mentioned earlier, a key part of being a socialist is convincing others to be socialists too. We want to win the next generation of radicalizing students to revolutionary Marxism and to membership in the ISO through a process of intentional and open recruitment. We sometimes call this “contact work”. “Contact” is simply a word for someone who has expressed interest in the ISO and our politics.

Perhaps they came to a meeting after seeing a branch leaflet or you met them at an SW sale. And they want to work with us and learn more about socialism. A central part of our group activity is explaining socialist ideas to a periphery of people that we attract to our meetings and meet in the course of our other activities, and winning them to our project.

Building the ISO, first of all, involves having an outward disposition. The importance of this stems from a simple fact: we have yet to meet most future socialists and future members of the ISO, and most future socialists aren’t socialists yet.

To build the ISO, therefore, we have to organize ourselves to go out and meet the next layer of people who can be won to socialist politics and membership in our organization. This is why we place a premium on *Socialist Worker* sales, tablings, outreach, and the development of strong, on-going political relationships with contacts.

Contact work is important because we want our movement and our organization to grow. It is also one of the most effective ways to learn about Marxism. Having arguments and conversations about Marxism with others whom we are trying to convince challenges us to develop a deeper understanding of Marxism. When we have to put the case for socialism to someone, it develops our debating skills, spurs us to deepen our knowledge, and improves our confidence.

Here are some key things to know about contact work: Get people’s names and their contact information; keep the conversation going if they seem interested; sell them a copy of *Socialist Worker* if they don’t already have one; make sure that before the discussion is over, you have set up another get-together to talk, have invited them to a protest or a demonstration, to our next meeting, or asked if they want to participate in a study group. Follow up with them after the first encounter and see if they are interested in continuing an on-going conversation. Be open and clear about the nature of this relationship: that it is a political relationship, not a friendship; that you want people to study and express their questions and disagreements; that we eventually want contacts who agree with our politics to join the ISO; etc. If they continue to show interest, invite them to participate in ISO activities, like flyering, SW sales, joining a fraction around a particular struggle, etc.

Recruitment is a process. We don’t simply ask people to join. If we sign up new members before they actually agree with our politics and the level of commitment it takes to be an organized socialist, then it is unlikely they will stay a member for very long (unless we do the necessary steps to recruit them after they’ve officially become a member; but that obviously isn’t an ideal order of operations). On the other hand, we want to make clear to contacts that we are not a talk shop. We are talking to them



about socialism because we want to convince them to join the ISO, whether in the short- or long-term. That time will vary depending on the level experience and kind of politics of the person before we met them.

It is also important to note that an outward disposition means that ISO members need to train themselves to engage with contacts at our events too. It isn't enough to get them to our events; we have to answer people's questions and win them to our politics once we get them in the door! We should always be friendly and introduce ourselves to new people who come to our meetings (or to a protest, or other activities we participate in). In this regard, we always try to avoid "cliquishness" or "clannishness" (relating to and talking only to people that we already know in the movement or in our immediate circles, or only to other members with whom we are familiar). When a meeting starts, are you chatting with your friends and colleagues, or walking over to the new face and saying hello? Of course, this doesn't come naturally—you have to make a real effort and develop habits that are conducive to building a revolutionary socialist organization.

## **Socialists and movements building**

Sometimes, people who are hostile to our politics and organization will claim that we "only want to recruit." But we do not counterpose building a socialist movement committed to ending capitalism to building strong movements and effective struggles. On the contrary, as socialists have proven time and time again, it is precisely because of our commitment to a world free of all oppression and exploitation that we are steadfastly committed to the success of every struggle, because we understand that it is in and through such struggles that people are radicalized and become more confident in their ability to change society.

Revolutionary socialists stand for the self-emancipation of the working class and oppressed people and think that to achieve this end we need to build the widest possible, best organized, and most self-conscious resistance to the everyday attacks by the ruling class. Both to achieve this end and to strengthen movements for immediate demands, we think that socialist organization, and eventually a revolutionary vanguard party—that is, an organization uniting the most advanced, politically conscious working-class fighters—is necessary.

There is no shortage of movement activity and opportunities for struggle. These struggles may or may not be large, but many of the small struggles taking place today have the potential to develop into future mass movements. And many of today's movement leaders will become tomorrow's revolutionaries.

The ISO does not involve itself in struggles just to "recruit" from them and walk away. On the contrary, we aim to involve our members in every opportunity for mean-

ingful struggle in every locality—and we build all genuine movements, whether or not they result in new ISO members. Struggle—and in particular, class struggle—is the only way to advance that aim.

In addition, ISO members hold fast to a commitment to respond to attacks, however small the response beyond ourselves. These include opposition to imperialist escapades, mobilizations against fascists and the KKK, responding to attacks on the oppressed, and participation in working-class struggles.

More generally, ISO members aim to build strong grassroots movements that can advance the struggles of the working-class and the oppressed the world over.

At the same time, we think that Marxism provides the only desirable way forward for human society. This recognition requires that we build a revolutionary socialist movement, and ISO members aim to win others to Marxism and involvement in the ISO's activities. Building the ISO is never counterposed to building movements. A stronger ISO will help to strengthen them at the grassroots.

## **6 How to use *Socialist Worker* on campus**

*Socialist Worker* is the main publication of the ISO and its leading public face alongside our members. *Socialist Worker* has been a newspaper since the ISO's founding, and is currently published on a monthly basis. SocialistWorker.org has taken on greater importance in recent years and has expanded its readership well beyond the ISO's membership. In both formats, SW is a crucial tool for reaching out to a wider audience for socialist politics.

*Socialist Worker* can be an excellent tool for use on campus. Not only does it cover a range of issues that will be on any engaged activist's mind, it also provides a very clear analysis and argument to explain how capitalism is at the root of the things that are wrong in the world. Unfortunately, on most campuses in the U.S., we do not have a culture of students looking to and reading leftwing and working class newspapers regularly, so it is usually something new that we are introducing students to. A well-planned and thoughtful SW sale can become a dynamic place to meet engaged activists and have great political discussions. And, because SW takes on debates that are happening in the movements right now, it can also be a really great way to engage with activists that you meet at political events and rallies. You should have SWs on you at all times when you are on campus, because you never know when you might get into a great conversation.

SW is more than just a tool for putting forward so-

cialist views and publicizing the ISO's analysis of political events. We use the Russian revolutionary Lenin's conception of the uses of a revolutionary paper to understand the roles both *Socialist Worker* and SocialistWorker.org can play for us. Lenin summarized those ideas in his 1901 article "Where to Begin?":

*The role of a newspaper, however, is not limited solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organizer. In this last respect, it may be likened to the scaffolding round a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, enabling them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organized labor. With the aid of the newspaper, and through it, a permanent organization will naturally take shape that will engage, not only in local activities, but in regular general work, and will train its members to follow political events carefully, appraise their significance and their effect on the various strata of the population, and develop effective means for the revolutionary party to influence these events.*

In other words, *SW* is also a crucial tool in the ways it creates a concrete relationship with an audience for socialist ideas. Selling the paper and promoting the website identifies the people who are interested in the organization and puts us in a tangible, face-to-face relationship. In addition, ISO members gain from conversations with *SW* readers because the process of ongoing political engagement with nonmembers helps members learn to articulate our politics more effectively to those outside the organization.

Even though the SocialistWorker.org website has taken on more importance for the ISO, we continue to publish and sell a paper edition. Selling the newspaper is an important part of being a member of the organization.

Branches organize tabling events in communities and on campuses on a weekly basis where selling the paper is an important part—sometimes the main thing—we'll want to be doing. Tablings have to be planned carefully. There should be signs to draw people's attention, and a well-organized table with petitions, leaflets for upcoming meetings and protests, the *ISR*, and some basic books on ISO politics. Whether you're asking people to sign a petition, to buy the paper, or to take a leaflet about an important struggle or upcoming ISO event, you should be confident and thinking about how to engage people who are interested in the ISO.

We also sell the paper as a part of how we relate to political events like demonstrations or public forums. Again, the priority isn't selling as many papers as possible but identifying the people who are interested in our pol-

itics and beginning a discussion with them. For the same reason, members are expected to buy five or more copies of each issue, and to sell individually to workmates, friends, etc. with the goal of building a political relationship with people who are sympathetic to the ISO and could be drawn closer to the organization.

Members should also read SocialistWorker.org on a daily basis and win others to do so as well, since it is updated daily during the week. The website provides news of struggles we are involved in around the organization and also provides a political analysis of important issues. Members should promote the website to anyone interested in socialist politics as the place to go regularly for news and views from the left. This is an important way of increasing the ISO's profile. Be sure to send out articles from the site by e-mail or to activist listservs. Socialist Worker has a Facebook page that members should promote if they're Facebook users, as well as contributing its presence on other social media.

The goal with *SW* is not simply sales. We are trying to get political ideas into people's hands and eventually recruit to the ISO. As a result, you cannot simply sell the paper and hope that someone automatically comes around to socialist politics. You have to follow up with them: call them to talk about the paper, invite them to a meeting, and have coffee to discuss the paper. You want to build political relationships around the newspaper and not simply be a newspaper salesperson.

### 1) *SW* sales

The primary place that you will be using *SW* is likely to be on a paper sale. Most campuses have designated places where organizations set up tables to meet people who might want to join them or learn about their activities (assess in your branch whether these assigned locations are the best locations to meet people on campus). Setting up a table may require filling out some paperwork and making sure you are a registered student group. Some campuses even provide you with tables. Check with your Student Affairs office (sometimes called the Office of Student Life) for the rules governing tabling. In some places, you may have to bring your own table. If your campus doesn't have a place where organizations are set up, find a high visibility location on campus (in front of the bookstore or dining hall, for instance) to set up a table.

Here are the basics of what you will need to do a *Socialist Worker* tabling/sale:

- Copies of *Socialist Worker*
- A signup sheet (so you can get in touch with the activists you meet) and pens
- Clipboards
- Leaflets for ISO meetings or for other upcoming political events that you are promoting
- Copies of the *International Socialist Review*

- A selection of political books from Haymarket Books
- A sign with “International Socialist Organization” on it for the front of the table (don’t forget the tape).
- Several comrades to staff the sale (a sale with several people on it is better than several sales with few people on them).

In order to do a more successful sale, though, you will also need the following:

- A poster with a political slogan on it (either about an issue from the paper or about something recent that people are talking about, e.g. “stop the bombing of Gaza”; “system change not climate change”)
- Any petitions for issues that you are working on

It should go without saying, but you have to read the paper in order to be able to sell the paper. You need to be able to explain what *SW* offers that other papers do not: a Marxist analysis and a way to do something about the problems.

Make the sales exciting and interactive. Ask people who stop by lots of questions (“are you interested in socialism”; “what do you think we can do about X”) and make the table feel like a place that is both welcoming to people and a place where people can come to talk to serious activists. Don’t just talk people’s ears off; you need to find out what’s on their mind to begin a political relationship with them!

A caveat: many students no longer carry any cash on them. It’s a good idea to hand a person without a dollar a leaflet instead of giving away a paper for free. Get their name and set up a time to get them the paper if they are really interested.

## 2) Branch meetings

*Socialist Worker* should also be an important part of branch life. Members can pick articles to introduce and talk about in branch meetings. Chairs or the branch *SW* coordinator should announce the newspaper and any relevant articles in it to the meeting. Having meetings where *SW* is talked about also makes it easier for comrades to sell the paper because they will also be familiar with the material in the newspaper.

You should encourage contacts to buy the paper, but also to buy an extra copy or two to sell to people that they might know.

## 3) Political activist groups

Take *SW*s to any political meeting that you attend. Talk to people who are interested and offer them a copy of the paper and especially point out any articles that you think they might be interested in. The goal here is not only to meet other activists, but to engage with the debates and conversations happening in a movement in order to figure out who might be close to you politically and who might

eventually be interested in joining the ISO.

## 4) Political rallies

At any political event or rally, bring a table (and follow the procedure in #1 above) if you can. If you can’t, at least bring some *SW*s and sell them here.

## 5) Writing about your campus for *SW*

A great way to make *SW* useful on campus is to write about issues that have come up on your campus for *Socialist Worker*. Political rallies and protests, union activity, racist incidents—all of these are things that can make for great *SW* articles and political exposures. These, in turn, can be used to talk to others on campus about issues that they relate to.

# 7 Organizing fractions

When there are a number of activities going on at the same time, larger branches will want to organize themselves into fractions. A fraction, (subcommittee or working group), is simply a group of members that focuses on a particular political activity or area of movement work. Not all fractions need to be permanent, but should focus on fulfilling the needs of the branch at any particular time. For example, a fraction might be organized to focus on Palestine/BDS, climate change, LGBT liberation, to build for a national demonstration or support for a local strike, or to build for an upcoming ISO conference. It is important that members get involved in fractions, but also make sure to focus themselves mainly on only one fraction. One purpose of fractions is to establish a division of labor in the branch that allows all members to be involved in activity while at the same time ensuring that no members are spreading themselves too thin. Each fraction should have regular discussions to plan and assess its work.

Fractions should report on their activities periodically to branch meetings in order to generalize the lessons they have learned and to allow input from the collective experience of the entire branch. No branch should allow fractions to operate autonomously: Every fraction is accountable to the decisions of the branch regarding its approach to a particular area of work, just as every branch is accountable to the rest of the national organization. This requires regular reporting to the branch at branch meetings.

Every fraction should see its work as combining two things—playing a key role in building the particular struggle they are involved in, debating and arguing the best way forward for that particular struggle; but also introducing other students alongside whom we are active to our own socialist ideas, publications, and events.



# 8 Dues and fundraising

## Member Dues

The ISO has no other reliable source of income than its membership. For this reason, finances have to be a key priority for the entire organization, including its branches. This, of course, requires branches to make sure that payments for dues and literature orders (*SW, ISR, etc.*) get sent to the national office on time.

Every branch should elect a branch treasurer, whose job is to ensure that all members are paying dues. The best (and easiest) way to get dues in regularly is to sign up all comrades for automatic dues withdrawal, so the treasurer does not need to personally collect them each month. A copy of the form appears as “Appendix B” in this Toolkit.

Below is the current sliding scale dues structure for the ISO:

## Monthly dues

	Members w/out children	Members w/ children
Monthly net income		
\$500–\$600	\$20–\$25	\$10–\$25
\$600–\$800	\$25–\$35	\$10–\$35
\$800–1,000	\$35–\$45	\$10–\$45
\$1,000–1,200	\$45–\$55	\$10–\$55
\$1,200–\$1,400	\$55–\$65	\$20–\$65
\$1,400–\$1,600	\$65–\$80	\$20–\$80
\$1,600 and up	\$80+*	\$30 and up

\*+ 7.5% of income over \$1600

Every branch should aim to become self-reliant financially, in order to fund its own local activities (meeting room costs, printing flyers, etc.). In addition, when inviting outside speakers, branches need to cover the speaker’s travel costs.

There are many creative ways for branches to raise money. Some colleges have large honoraria funds available to fund speakers with academic credentials (including book authors), and ISO members on campuses should try to navigate the bureaucracy to access honoraria for invited speakers. Becoming an officially recognized student organization on your campus often brings additional benefits such as free publicity, funding for events, poster-making supplies, etc.

Fundraising should be an ongoing aspect of every branch’s activity. Besides yard sales, car washes, film showings, parties and concerts, branches can brainstorm about new and creative ways to raise money. “Passing the hat” for donations at meetings, or having a “Change for change” jar on ISO information tables can add up and branches should develop these practices into routines and habits.

Keep in mind that fundraising events can and should be about more than raising money. Radical film series, Socialist holiday parties (such as May Day or International Women’s Day), and other fundraisers are also political events that can draw in allies and activists that we work with in movements.

## Registering the ISO as a Club on Campus

Comrades should register the ISO a campus club as soon they can. Each school has different procedures for how to do this. You should talk with existing student groups about how they did it or follow the guidelines that student governments and/or administrations provide to become a recognized club.

Often you will have to draft a constitution, submit a list of members, and establish officers for the group. You should do whatever you need to fulfill such requirements. If you need help with specific questions you should consult your organizer in the National Office. As you set up the group, remember that how you fulfill the bureaucratic requirements of the university is sometimes different than the normal procedures of the ISO. Our structures laid out on the member’s toolkit should of course take precedence over those you have to establish to become a recognized group.

Becoming a student group enables you to do all sorts of things from reserving rooms, hosting conferences to applying for a budget and special honoraria for speakers. Gaining access to funds is obviously very helpful for organizing. What is possible depends on the kind of campus. Private schools and some public universities often provide student groups with large sums of money to organize events. Community colleges, because of class inequality and neoliberalism, are usually less able to provide funds.

Find out what kind of budgets other groups, especially the Democrats and Republicans, have from student governments and the school. Develop plans and a budget for the school year and submit it as other groups do. Be ambitious. The more money you raise the more speakers and events you can host. Being a student group also enables you to reach out academic departments to get them to provide money for events and honoraria as well. Sometimes you can get access to special funds to attend conferences of various kinds. Take advantage of all such opportunities.

Finally, becoming an established student group helps build the ISO’s relationship with other groups on each campus and the college and university system across the country. When you are a group it’s much easier to ask for co-sponsorship and to co-sponsor the events of other groups. And it enables the ISO to project itself as a political alternative for students throughout the U.S.



## 9 Basic how-to's

### A. How to organize a public meeting

#### 1 Find a location

Aim for a room that you can fill safely. Better a packed small room than a half-empty auditorium!

#### 2 Produce a flyer

You produce a flyer for postering (be sure to find out the rules regarding laws regarding posting in your locality), and to hand out at public tablings, events, rallies, etc. Make the flyer large and easy to read from across the street. Also, make it interesting! The text should be short (a few sentences are good) and attempt to provoke questions and interest in the topic rather than explaining the whole issue. That's what the meeting is for. Too many words only take away from the main point. Be certain to include the date, time, and exact location of your meeting on the poster, along with directions and phone number for more information. Note: for the safety of our members and to provide a permanent branch contact number, we recommend that you use a dedicated branch voicemail number instead of an individual's private number, and that you assign someone to check it frequently.

#### 3 Invite and confirm speakers

Set an approximate date, never less than a couple of weeks away. If you are expecting speakers from out of town for big public meetings, four weeks of preparation time is best. The speaker will need time to prepare the talk and make travel arrangements, and your branch will want time to build and publicize the meeting. You should allow ten days to two weeks of preparation for speakers from your own branch.

#### 4 Decide the purpose of the meeting

What do you want the talk to cover and what kind of audience are you aiming for? Make sure to communicate this to the speaker ahead of time.

#### 5 Ask nonmembers to attend the meeting

Comrades should also work to make the necessary arrangements to help nonmembers get to the meeting, such as offering rides or meet-ups. This is an important part of our on-going contact work (see the section on contact work above for more information).

#### 6 Do extensive outreach/publicity

We always need to do outreach beyond inviting people to our events through Facebook event invites. We should place an emphasis on wide publicity, especially through tablings, phoning contacts, sending personalized emails and

Facebook messages, and posting flyers far and wide. When postering, however, please note that there are new legal restrictions in place since 9/11 that allow police to fine organizations that poster in banned public places. For this reason, the ISO does not endorse its members placing flyers in public places where prohibited by local or state law. Examples may include mailboxes, light poles or signposts. Members are encouraged to verify their state and local law for application regulations. All flyers should be marked "Do not post where prohibited."

#### 7 Get stories or interviews on local radio stations or in newspapers with the speaker

If you can provide a newsworthy angle, they may run a story or an interview that includes details of the meeting.

#### 8 Organize a literature table for the meeting

The table should have books and pamphlets relevant to the topic of the meeting, along with a general selection of Marxist literature—including the *ISR* and *Socialist Worker*.

### B. How to chair a public meeting

#### Starting the meeting

Remember that the chairperson is the first to speak. The impression you create is important. The key point is to appear confident and welcoming (after all, we should make it clear that we are pleased to see all attendees).

If you are not very confident, it is better to write out your opening remarks. These remarks are not just a formality; they should get the attention of the audience and prepare the way for the speaker.

Have a conversation with the speaker beforehand and make sure that you are on the same page about the title of the talk (it's surprising how often chairpersons announce something other than the topic that the speaker prepared for). Also make sure that the speaker understands how much time is allotted for the talk. Finally, ask the speaker how they wish to be introduced when you make your opening remarks to the audience.

Experienced chairpeople have all sorts of opening gambits, but beginners should feel free to use a simple and obvious approach. It might go something like this:

Good evening and welcome to this meeting of the [your city here] branch of the International Socialist Organization. Tonight, [name of speaker, along with relevant details about speaker] is going to speak on [topic of meeting]. She will speak for 30 minutes [or whatever time has been fixed], and then we will have plenty of time for questions and discussion. Without further ado, I will turn it over to [speaker's name]."

You should be ready to vary your remarks when war-

ranted by circumstances. If a few people are standing at the back even though there are empty seats in front (people always sit at the back first), you should coax them forward. You can say something like, “There are a few seats toward the front. It would probably be more comfortable for everyone and save the speaker’s voice if everyone could move forward.”

Then you should pause, coax them more if necessary, and give them time to move. Also, make sure everyone knows that you are glad to see them, even if you have only five people when you expected fifty.

Similarly, if you have a packed room and people are shuffling in while you speak, don’t hesitate to say, “We’ll wait a minute or two so everyone can get settled.”

A final word on manner: Stand up to speak when possible, unless the meeting is very small. Speak clearly and not too quickly. Never mumble. Address the audience, not the floor.

### *During the talk*

Not all speakers are aware of the amount of time they have been speaking. Before the meeting begins, discuss the time expectations and ask if it’s okay to remind the speaker during the talk with notes that indicate the time remaining. “10 minutes left,” “5 minutes left,” (or in whatever increments the speaker prefers), “WRAP UP,” or “STOP” (in large letters) should be put in front of the speaker at the appropriate times during the course of their talk. This can help the speaker edit the talk on the fly and keep it from going on too long.

It is the chairperson’s job to see that the speaker sticks more or less to the allotted time, to allow ample time for discussion. No one else can do it. However, if a speaker has the audience enthralled well beyond the allotted time, or if it would be politically difficult to call a stop, the chairperson should not do so. These decisions require on-the-spot judgments, and the chairperson should make them politically.

Interruptions pose a less frequent difficulty. Audiences usually are incredibly patient, but now and then you could get a little heckling. Experienced speakers who know their stuff ought to be able to deal with this (indeed, they can probably turn it to their advantage). The intervention of the chair is not called for unless things look like they are getting out of hand.

If the interruptions are developing into a real nuisance, then, of course, it is your job to stop it. The thing to remember is this: You have to carry the audience with you. Stand up, stop the speaker and say, “Just a second,” and in a patient but firm fashion, appeal to the heckler and the audience: “We are allotting plenty of time for questions and comments after the speaker is finished. It would be helpful if people would allow [speaker’s name] to finish and save their own contributions for the discussion period.

Everyone who wants to will get a turn to speak, so let’s have things run in an orderly fashion. And please respect the chair.”

Normally, if this is put across in a pleasant, confident manner it will do the trick. If it doesn’t, you will have to repeat your request. As a last resort, warn hecklers that if they persist, they will be asked to leave. This is a very rare situation.

Tact, patience, firmness, and good humor will usually carry the day.

### *Questions and discussion*

Once the talk is finished, you can give the audience a chance to formulate questions by passing around a sign-up sheet (asking for their phone number and their email address to be added to the ISO’s mailing list) and making one or two short announcements. Set a time limit (3 minutes is ample) for contributions. Inform the audience of this limit and apply it impartially to all. Leave room for questions to be taken up from the floor before returning it to the speaker, but do allow the speaker to respond to questions as needed. If there are a number of questions on the floor that haven’t been addressed by the audience, it makes sense for the speaker to get a chance to respond.

It is generally a good idea at the very beginning to ask people to raise questions if they have them. This can encourage people to get their disagreements out early rather than at the very end of the discussion period, which provides for a fuller conversation.

One common problem is a questioner who doesn’t understand the difference between asking a question and making a speech. This person must be tactfully but firmly be kept to a three-minute time limit. Make sure that everyone has a fair chance to ask a question or formulate a disagreement, but don’t allow anyone to carry on a dialog with the speaker to the exclusion of less pushy, but perhaps more useful, questioners.

When time or the discussion has run out, call it to an end.

If there are activities planned that relate to the topic of the meeting, the comrade coordinating the activity should make a brief announcement, calling on others to get involved. Then make any brief announcements from the front of the room. Be sure to advertise other literature and ISO publications available on the book table, calling attention to anything that might be particularly relevant to the subject of the meeting.

Make sure to announce the restaurant or coffeehouse where you will be gathering for more informal discussion after the meeting, and don’t forget to thank people for coming.

## **C. How to chair an ISO branch meeting**

In a branch meeting, the role of the chairperson is also absolutely vital. The chair can make the difference between brisk and pleasant meetings where people leave feeling that they have done something useful, and the opposite. To achieve a desirable end chairpeople need the same skills as for a public meeting. But they also need to know about basic procedures for democratic decision-making in the ISO.

### *The agenda*

Every organizing meeting, however small, needs an agenda. An agenda is simply a list of the items of business, the order in which they will be discussed, and suggested time limits for each item (branch members can always vote to extend discussion on a particular item, while tabling another item to the next meeting, or limiting its allocated time, in order to keep to a two-hour time limit).

It is the branch committee's or branch organizer's job to draft a proposed agenda. It is important that the agenda is realistic. Not everything the branch is involved in can or should be discussed at every meeting. Agendas should reflect the branch's political and organizational priorities for that week.

It is the chairperson's job to put the agenda to the meeting for approval or amendment. Often members will propose additions to the agenda. Remember that not every item proposed should be added to the agenda. Perhaps the majority doesn't want to discuss that particular item. The proposal to add or delete an item must be put to a vote. In general, the swifter the discussion is about the agenda, the better. If the branch organizer and chairperson have done their jobs properly beforehand, acceptance of the agenda will take less than 5 minutes, and the meeting time will be conserved for approved agenda items.

Once an agenda is adopted, it is the chairperson's job to see that it is adhered to—and that members do not raise extraneous points that take the branch away from the agenda.

# AUTOMATIC DUES WITHDRAWAL FORM

## International Socialist Organization Dues Auto-pay Authorization Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last, First, Middle Initial)

Choose one:

<input type="checkbox"/> New enrollment	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancel participation	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase/Lower
Complete, sign and return This form. Please attach a voided check to the form.	Sign below and return this form.	Please circle one and return this form. Fill in new amount below.

### Bank Information

Bank name: \_\_\_\_\_

Routing number\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Account number: \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of account (check one):    Checking \_\_\_\_\_    Savings \_\_\_\_\_

\*Your bank's routing number is printed on your checks. It is the 9-digit number in the bottom-left corner.

I hereby authorize and request the International Socialist Organization and the financial institution listed above to debit the indicated bank account in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on the 16th day of each month.

I understand that I may terminate this agreement by giving notice to the International Socialist Organization. I may do this at any time in writing, but must also allow a reasonable amount of time after receipt for the International Socialist Organization to act upon it. I also understand that additional service charges may apply if payment is returned due to insufficient funds.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Remember to attach a voided check

You may fax in a copy with a voided check to 773-583-6144 in order get this form in before the 15th of the month, but you must follow it up by mailing the hard copy to the ISO, P.O. Box 16085, Chicago, IL 60616.



# **Becoming a Marxist**

## **ISO Education Department**

A suggested reading list for new members\*

### **Before joining the ISO:**

By the time you join you should have read:

*The Case for Socialism* by Alan Maass

*Where We Stand: The Politics of the International Socialist Organization* (published by the ISO Education Department)

*The Meaning of Marxism* by Paul D'Amato

Hopefully, you will also be planning to soon read:

*The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, edited by Phil Gasper

### **During the first year (two years at most), you should plan to read:**

*Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* by Frederick Engels

*The two Souls of Socialism* by Hal Draper

*Left Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder* by V.I. Lenin

*State and Revolution* by V.I. Lenin

*Imperialism: Highest Stage of Capitalism* by V.I. Lenin

*Reform or Revolution* by Rosa Luxemburg

*Party and Class* by Cliff, Hallas, Harman, and Trotsky

*Black Liberation and Socialism* by Ahmed Shawki

*Subterranean Fire: A History of Working-Class Radicalism in the United States* by Sharon Smith

*Women and Socialism* by Sharon Smith

*Sexuality and Socialism* by Sherry Wolf

*The Democrats: A Critical History* by Lance Selfa

For a more developed and detailed education plan, please consult the ISO National Office.

## PUBLIC MEETING AND DISCUSSION

# WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN THE SOCIALISTS & CHANGE THE WORLD

### DATE:

**Capitalism is killing the planet.** We face escalating ecological crises, unending wars and occupations from Iraq and Afghanistan to the U.S.-backed Israeli assaults on Palestine, racism has led to mass incarceration and out-of-control anti-immigrant bigotry, and women and LGBTQ people face rising levels of misogyny and homophobia. The economic prospects for our generation are growing dimmer by the day with falling pay and historically high levels unemployment. Meanwhile, big business is colonizing our campuses and trying to reshape our right to an education to serve its own interests. *All of this in pursuit of profit. Enough is enough!*

### MEETING LOCATION:

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### CONTACT:

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Fortunately, there is also resistance. Hundreds of thousands will march in New York City in September to demand climate action. Students for Justice in Palestine and other groups are demanding our universities divest from Israeli apartheid. Young workers are demanding a \$15 minimum wage and a union. Women are speaking out against rape culture and LGBTQ people are winning equal marriage and building a movement for sexual equality. Immigrant Dream Act organizers are making the politicians pay for their anti-immigrant policies and families across the country are standing up against the racist police murder of their sons and daughters.

Socialists are involved in each and everyone of these fights. And while we fight on all these fronts, we also believe it is necessary to link the terrible conditions we all face back to their source, capitalism. If we want to save the planet and win social and economic justice for the world's majority, it will take a revolution, it will take socialism. More than 150 years ago, Karl Marx raised the slogan, "Workers of the World, Unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains." That has never more true that it is today. But if we want to win, we can't just act blindly. We need to study history and theory, debate out our ideas, and build revolutionary organization.

**We want to change the world. If you do too, then we need you and you need us. Come join the International Socialist Organization for a discussion of how we can build a movement to get rid of capitalism and what you can do to help.**

**ISO Dues Structure**

Monthly Net Income	Dues for members w/o children	Dues for members w/ children
\$500-\$600	\$20-\$25	\$10-\$25
\$600-\$800	\$25-\$35	\$10-\$35
\$800-\$1,000	\$35-\$45	\$10-\$45
\$1,000-\$1,200	\$45-\$55	\$10-\$55
\$1,200-\$1,400	\$55-\$65	\$20-\$65
\$1,400-\$1,600	\$65-\$80	\$20-\$80
\$1,600 and up	\$80 + 7.5% of income over \$1,600	\$30 and up

# International Socialist Organization Membership Card

*For Workers Power and International Socialism*

**International Socialist Organization**

P.O. Box 16085  
Chicago, IL 60616

773.583.5069

773.583.6144 (fax)

[www.internationalsocialist.org](http://www.internationalsocialist.org)

**2014**



**ISO Dues Structure**

Monthly Net Income	Dues for members w/o children	Dues for members w/ children
\$500-\$600	\$20-\$25	\$10-\$25
\$600-\$800	\$25-\$35	\$10-\$35
\$800-\$1,000	\$35-\$45	\$10-\$45
\$1,000-\$1,200	\$45-\$55	\$10-\$55
\$1,200-\$1,400	\$55-\$65	\$20-\$65
\$1,400-\$1,600	\$65-\$80	\$20-\$80
\$1,600 and up	\$80 + 7.5% of income over \$1,600	\$30 and up

# International Socialist Organization Membership Card

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P.O. Box 16085  
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**2014**



**ISO Dues Structure**

Monthly Net Income	Dues for members w/o children	Dues for members w/ children
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\$600-\$800	\$25-\$35	\$10-\$35
\$800-\$1,000	\$35-\$45	\$10-\$45
\$1,000-\$1,200	\$45-\$55	\$10-\$55
\$1,200-\$1,400	\$55-\$65	\$20-\$65
\$1,400-\$1,600	\$65-\$80	\$20-\$80
\$1,600 and up	\$80 + 7.5% of income over \$1,600	\$30 and up

# International Socialist Organization Membership Card

*For Workers Power and International Socialism*

**International Socialist Organization**

P.O. Box 16085  
Chicago, IL 60616

773.583.5069

773.583.6144 (fax)

[www.internationalsocialist.org](http://www.internationalsocialist.org)

**2014**



**ISO Dues Structure**

Monthly Net Income	Dues for members w/o children	Dues for members w/ children
\$500-\$600	\$20-\$25	\$10-\$25
\$600-\$800	\$25-\$35	\$10-\$35
\$800-\$1,000	\$35-\$45	\$10-\$45
\$1,000-\$1,200	\$45-\$55	\$10-\$55
\$1,200-\$1,400	\$55-\$65	\$20-\$65
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**2014**



## Rules for Membership

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■ *ISO Rules and Procedures, Section IIA*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Branch \_\_\_\_\_

### Monthly Dues

- Registered for dues check off
- |                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> January  | <input type="checkbox"/> July      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> February | <input type="checkbox"/> August    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> March    | <input type="checkbox"/> September |
| <input type="checkbox"/> April    | <input type="checkbox"/> October   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> May      | <input type="checkbox"/> November  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> June     | <input type="checkbox"/> December  |

Members pay dues on a sliding scale according to income. See the ISO Dues Structure on the back of this card.

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## 2014 Membership Form

Branch \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Union \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Monthly Dues \_\_\_\_\_  Registered for dues check off  
(See the ISO Dues Structure on membership card to set your dues)

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